

Montana Driver Education and Training

Strategies for Urban Driving



Standards and Benchmarks

1. Laws and Highway System

- a. know the laws outlined in the Montana Driver's manual
- b. understand the laws outlined in the Montana Driver's manual
- c. consistently demonstrate knowledge and understanding by responsible adherence to highway transportation system traffic laws and control devices

2. Responsibility

- b. demonstrate the ability to make appropriate decisions while operating a motor vehicle
- c. consistently display respect for other users of the highway transportation system
- d. develop habits and attitudes with regard to responsible driving

3. Visual Skills

- a. know proper visual skills for operating a motor vehicle
- b. communicate and explain proper visual skills for operating a motor vehicle
- c. demonstrate the use of proper visual skills for operating a motor vehicle
- d. develop habits and attitudes with regard to proper visual skills

4. Vehicle Control

- a. demonstrate smooth, safe and efficient operation of a motor vehicle
- b. develop habits and attitudes relative to safe, efficient and smooth vehicle operation.



Standards and Benchmarks

5. Communication

- a. consistently communicate their driving intentions (i.e., use of lights, vehicle and personal signals)
- b. adjust their driver behavior based on observation of highway transportation system and other users
- c. adjust communication (i.e., use of lights, vehicle and personal signals) based on observation of highway transportation system and other users
- d. develop habits and attitudes relative to effective communication

6. Risk Management

- a. understand driver risk-management principles
- b. demonstrate driver risk-management strategies
- c. develop driver risk-management habits and attitudes

7. Lifelong Learning

- a. understand past, present and future vehicle and roadway design, and driving cultures
- c. understand benefits of a lifelong learning approach to driving
- e. identify opportunities for lifelong education in driving

8. Driving Experience

- a. acquire at least the minimum number of BTW hours over at least the minimum number of days, as required by law, with a Montana approved driver education instructor
- b. be encouraged to acquire additional BTW driving experience with their parent or guardian's assistance in a variety of driving situations (i.e., night, adverse weather, gravel road, etc.).



Urban Driving Characteristics

- **Urban and suburban driving includes residential areas where traffic can be light; business areas where traffic can be congested and inconsistent; and higher speed areas, designed to move traffic through an urban area**



Business District Characteristics

- There are more hazards mile for mile in city driving than in residential area driving
- At times the hectic pace of city traffic can almost become overwhelming



Photo courtesy of the AAA Foundation



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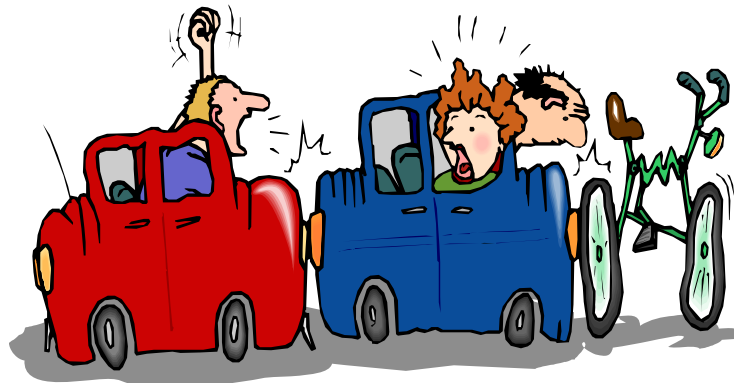
Business District Characteristics

1. Pedestrians, bicyclists, road signs, billboards, traffic signals, advertisements and road markings
2. Many intersections controlled by traffic signs and signals
3. Streets wider than residential streets
4. City blocks divided by alleys, creating even more intersections
5. Many stores and businesses
6. Faster traffic
7. Traffic that starts and stops frequently
8. Gridlocked traffic due to “rush hour” congestion
9. Stop and go traffic lasting for many blocks or miles
10. Crashes and/or special events like parades or concerts creating a need for alternate routes



Business District Characteristics

11. Rows of parked vehicles, delivery trucks and blind alleys creating line-of-sight and path-of-travel restrictions to roadways and pedestrians
12. Parking difficult to locate
13. Drivers competing for lane openings or parking spaces
14. Work zones creating congested conditions and impatient drivers
15. Detours due to street maintenance or emergencies
16. Pot holes caused by heavy traffic
17. Double parked delivery trucks



Business District Characteristics



In this traffic scene, how many business district characteristics can you identify?



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Business District Characteristics



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Business District Characteristics



In this traffic scene, how many business district characteristics can you identify?



Risky Behaviors in Business Districts

- Failing to plan a route
- Failing to search at least one block ahead
- Failing to search for pedestrians moving into the street
- Taking the right of way from other drivers
- Tailgating
- Speeding
- Failing to signal
- Failing to check blind areas
- Running red lights
- When parked, opening the street side door into oncoming traffic
- Failing to wear a seat belt



Is there a risky driver behavior in this traffic scene?



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Urban and Suburban Residential Areas

- Residential areas typically have lower traffic volume and slower speed limits
- Speed limits on residential streets are usually 25 mph or less
- Most crashes occur close to home; perhaps because drivers are more comfortable and less inattentative to familiar roads and conditions

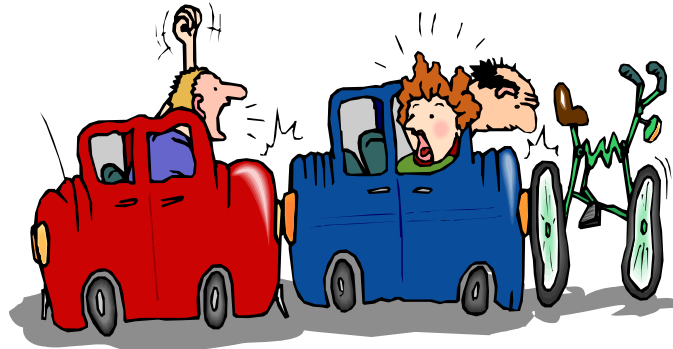


Is this residential area similar to where you live?



Urban and Suburban Residential Area Characteristics

- More narrow streets
- A faster pace than in business areas
- Streets not well lit at night in suburban areas
- Streets in urban business areas may be well-lighted at night
- Hidden driveways
- Controlled and uncontrolled intersections that are difficult to identify



Urban and Suburban Residential Area Characteristics

- More pedestrians, walkers, bicyclists, runners and joggers
- Speed bumps used to discourage speeders
- Some neighborhoods permit parking on either side of the street resulting in traffic moving into the street from either direction
- Parked cars create line-of-sight problems
- Line-of-sight restrictions caused by trees, bushes, signs
- Inattentative children in residential areas as they play in the roadways, ride bikes, roller skate, ride on skateboards, and use power toys



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Urban and Suburban Residential Area Characteristics



On this residential street,
how many characteristics
can you identify?



Urban and Suburban Residential Area Characteristics



You are the driver. How many residential characteristics can you identify?



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Urban and Suburban Residential Area Characteristics

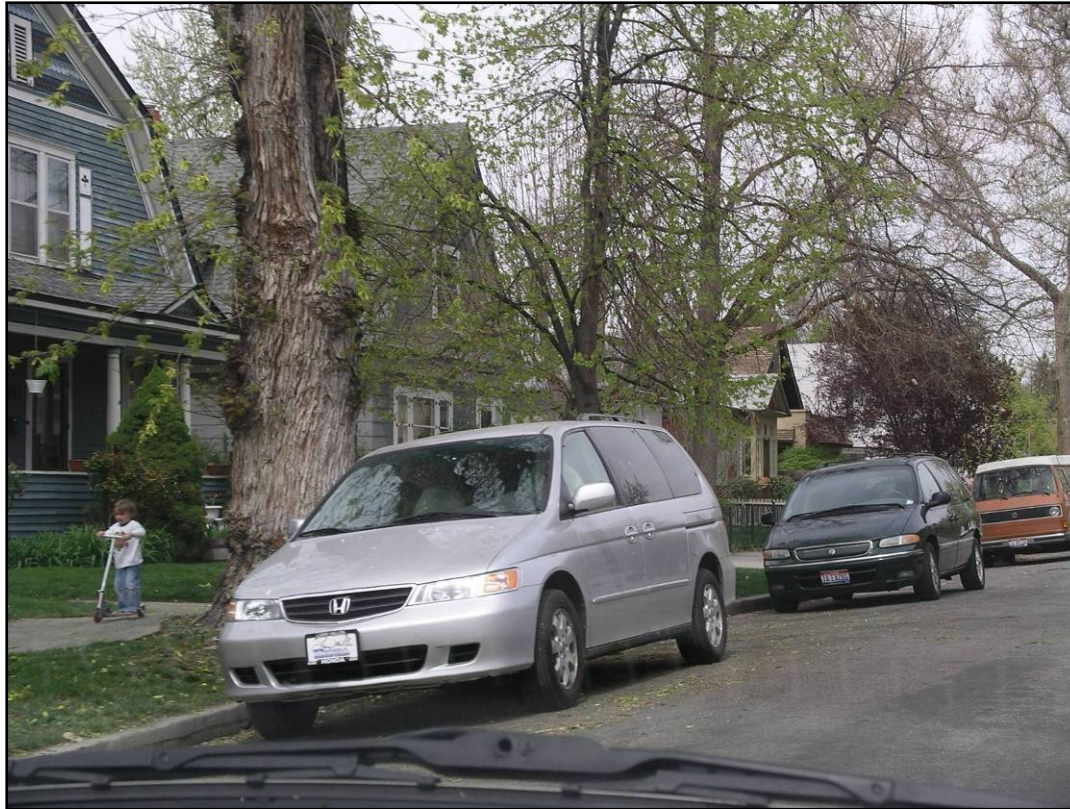


You are the driver. How can you improve your line of sight?



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Urban and Suburban Residential Area Characteristics



Will the child on the scooter
create a concern for drivers?
Why?



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Risky Behaviors in Urban and Suburban Residential Areas

- Speeding
- Failing to search for pedestrians and bicyclists entering or on the street
- Failing to look for line-of-sight restrictions that hide traffic signs
- Ignoring speed bumps
- Failing to yield the right of way on narrow streets
- Running stop signs
- Failing to look for traffic and pedestrians when exiting a driveway
- Failing to wear a seat belt



**You are the driver.
Describe risky driver
behaviors to avoid.**



Two-Lane Streets

- On two lane streets avoid crossing the centerline to go around cars that are parking, double parked delivery vehicles, taxis, buses or other Path-of-Travel restriction until there is no on-coming traffic
- On streets with two lanes going in the same direction, the left lane might not be the best travel lane
- Sudden starts and stops may occur if there are no turn lanes or center share lane to help traffic make left turns
- Oncoming traffic may drift across the centerline into the other lane



**You are the driver
approaching this scene.
What lane position would
you choose? Why?**



Two-Lane Streets

The speed limit on this roadway is 55 mph

The drivers are all driving at the maximum speed limit



In this traffic scene, identify the driver, environment, and vehicle conditions drivers should see and be aware of



Two-Lane Streets

Describe
all the
signs,
signals,
and
markings in
this street
scene



Is this street flat or on a hill?



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Multiple Lane Streets

On streets with two or more lanes and a center share lane, choose the lane with the smoothest flow



You are the driver.
Which lane would you
choose to travel in.
Why?



Navigating Intersections

- Time arrival at the signal
- Search deep, left-front-right
- Signal appropriately
- Be able to clear the intersection
- Maintain rear zone awareness
- Stop where you can see the tires of the vehicle ahead touching the road
- Wait two seconds before moving when the light turns green
- Identify a safe gap



**You are the driver.
Describe your front zone.**



Lane Choices

- Lane choice can increase or decrease stress and risk
- Weaving in and out of traffic increases risk
- Identify lanes with less traffic
- Right lanes can become blocked
- Left lanes can be hazardous
- One way streets help move larger volumes of vehicles but can contribute to driver confusion
- Avoid lanes next to parked cars



Bus Lanes

- Do not be tempted to pass a stopped bus if you are caught behind the bus; wait until the bus starts moving before changing lanes
- If driving in the lane along side the bus, watch for pedestrians going to and from the bus



Identify lanes marked for use exclusively for buses; do not occupy these lanes



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Buses

- Buses can create traffic jams as vehicles wait for them to load or unload passengers
- Search 12-15 seconds ahead for buses moving to and away from bus stops; move to another lane if available



You are the driver preparing to pass this bus. What action will you take? Why?



Pedestrians and Bicyclists

- Pedestrians and bicyclists are always the losers in a collision
- Watch for inattentive pedestrians
- Urban business districts will have more pedestrians crossing the roadway who may be distracted or carrying packages
- Watch for jaywalkers moving into the path of travel
- Pedestrians and bicyclists can be momentarily hidden



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Bicyclists



If you were the driver backing into this parking space, what actions would you take? Why?



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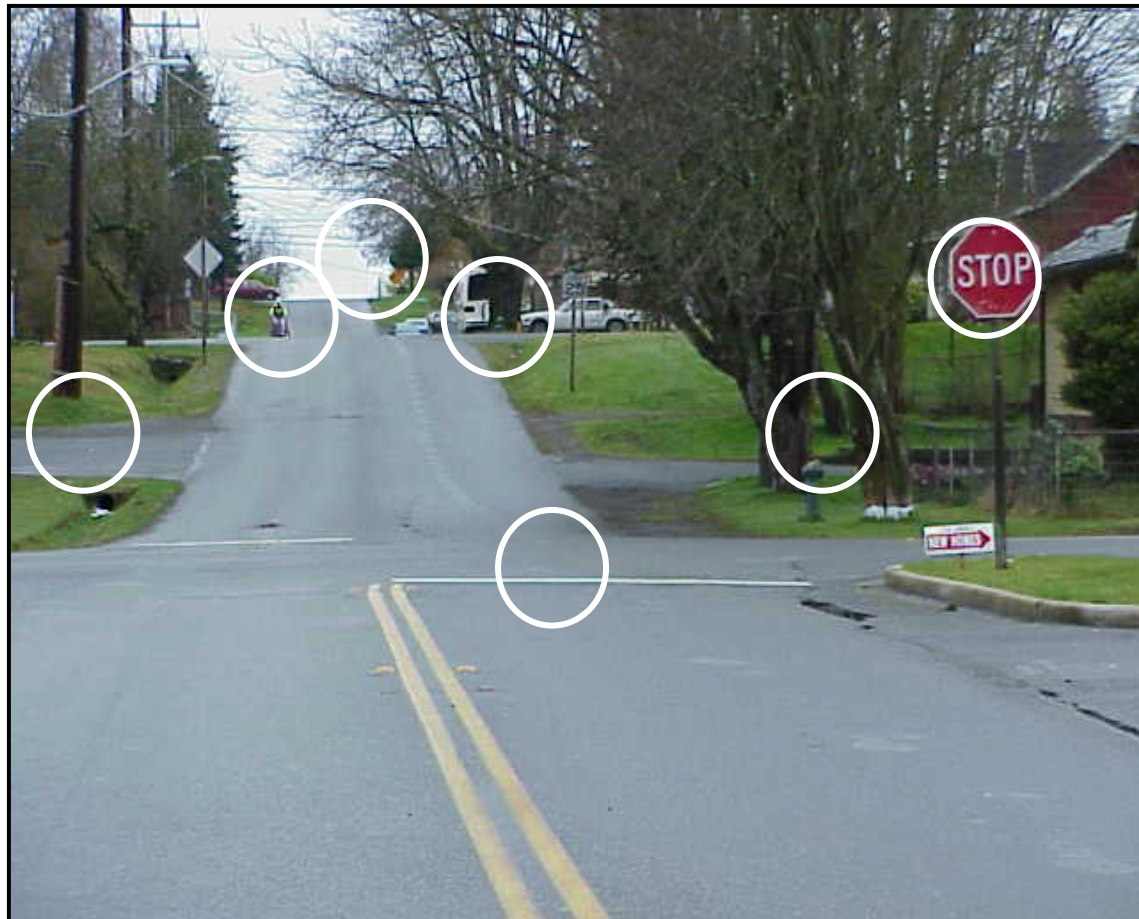
Lane Changes

- Changing lanes in congested traffic carries added risk
- Other drivers may want to enter the same lane at the same time
- Traffic turning left could be more difficult to identify in the traffic mix



Good Habits Managing Time and Space in Urban Environments

- Use an Orderly Search



Where Should Drivers Search?



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Where Should Drivers Search?



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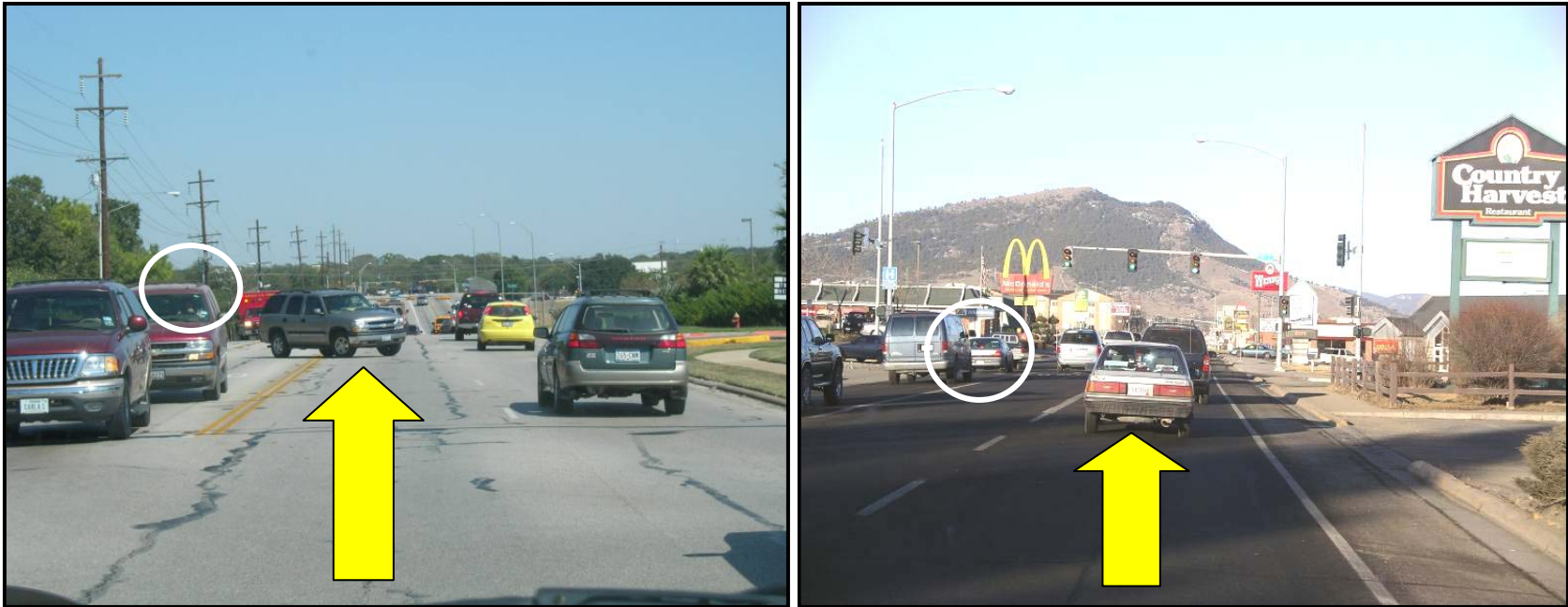


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Where Should Drivers Search?



Control Space to the Front



You are traveling at 25 mph, what actions would you take to control your space?

Evaluate the following distance of the vehicles marked with a circle



Communicate to Others



What communication clues are seen in these traffic scenes?



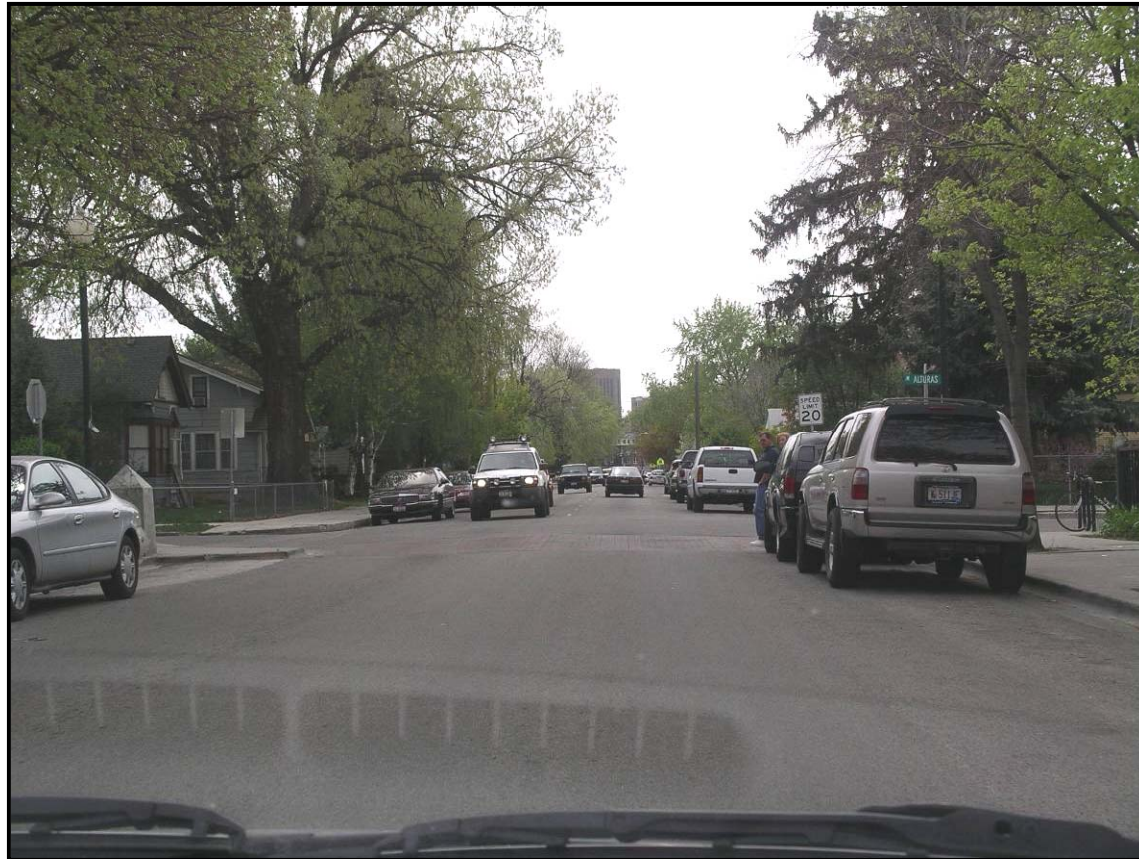
Make Reduced Risk Decisions



- Stay within the posted speed limit and choose to reduce speed to reduce risk
- Know your Perception time (the amount of time it takes to see a hazard) and Reaction time (the time it takes to act after seeing the hazard)
- Know how to access local traffic information to plan alternative routes
- Plan routes that avoid rush hour and work zone congestion
- Avoid frequent lane changes — it greatly increases the chance of a collision
- Make smooth, controlled steering and braking maneuvers
- Always wear a seat belt



Make Reduced Risk Decisions



You are traveling at 30 mph. Search your target area. Describe the reduced-risk actions you would take.



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